(d) if so, the reasons for opposing the bifurcation of Eastern Railway Zone?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Territorial readjustments of not only Eastern Railway, but also all the other existing Zonal Railways, excepting North-east Frontier Railway are being done, due to reorganisation of Indian Railways, so as to improve efficiency and provide relief to heavily worked Zones.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The reasons given by West Bengal Government, in opposing the decision, include certain apprehensions like reduced size and crippling of Eastern Railway, transfer of staff, operational disadvantages and state boundary considerations, which have been allayed through a suitable reply.

Rail accidents in States

†*91. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) which States witnessed the largest number of rail accidents during the last three years, giving the State-wise details thereof; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to check the same?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) The figures of accidents are not maintained State-wise. Zonal Railway-wise consequential train accidents during the last three years are given below:—

Railway	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002*
Central Railway	68	58	50
Eastern Railway	31	35	47
Northern Railway	80	66	79
North Eastern Railway	25	37	37
North-east Frontier Railway	76	95	58
Southern Railway	48	43	35
South Central Railway	49	48	36
South Eastern Railway	52	53	50
Western Railway	30	29	22
Konkan Railway Corporation	4	9	1
Metro Railway	—	—	—
Total	463	473	415*

*Figures are provisional.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Some of the important steps taken to reduce accidents are as under:—

(i) A non-lapsable Special Railway Safety Fund of Rs. 17,000 crores has been set up for renewal of over aged assets and for safety enhancement works.

(ii) Fouling Mark to Fouling Mark (FM to FM) track circuiting on entire 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'D Spl.' Routes, having speed above 75 kmph, has been done and remaining portion of the work is under progress.

(iii) A pilot project of European Train Control System (ETCS) on trial basis for Mathura-Palwal section of Central Railway has been sanctioned.

(iv) Extended field trials of Anti Collision Device (ACD) are being conducted on Northern Railway. After successful completion of extended field trials, a decision would be taken for its wider application.

(v) Last vehicle check by Axle Counter have been introduced over 175 block sections and more sections are being progressively added.

(vi) State-of-the-art technology of Digital Mobile Train Radio Communication has been sanctioned on some important sections for providing duplex radio communication between driver/guard and control.

(vii) Walkie-talkie sets have been provided to Drivers and Guards of all trains for faster and better means of communication.

(viii) Drivers and Guards are also being progressively provided with LED based electronic flashing lamps having better visibility.

(ix) The Tamping and ballast cleaning machines and Track Renewal Trains are being used to get superior track geometry.

(x) To monitor track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometers are being used progressively.

(xi) For detection of hidden flaws in rails/welds, adequate double rail Ultra Sonic Flaw Detectors have been procured. Self Propelled Ultrasonic Rail Testing Cars are being procured.

(xii) At the Rail Rolling Mill, Bhilai, online Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD) and eddy current testing is being done to weed out rails with defects. Vacuum degassing is being done to reduce hydrogen content and thus improve quality of rails. Indian Railways and Bhilai Steel Plant of Steel Authority of India Limited are also planning together to produce longer rails i.e. 26 metre and 65 or 78 metre, instead of conventional 13 metre length to reduce number of welds in the track.

(xiii) The specification of Rail steel have been upgraded and are in conformity with the International Union of Railways (UIC) specifications.

(xiv) Funds being received from the diesel cess are being used for safety related works pertaining to level crossings, Road Over bridges/Road Under bridges.

(xv) Routine Over Hauling Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the axles so as to prevent cases of cold breakage of axles.

(xvi) Whistle Boards/speed breakers and road signs have been provided at unmanned level crossings.

(xvii) Audio-visual publicity campaigns are undertaken to educate road users on the precautions to be taken at level crossings.

(xviii) Level Crossings having heavy traffic density are being progressively interlocked with signals on a planned basis.

(xix) Steps are being taken to prevent inflammable and explosive materials from being carried in passenger trains.

(xx) Periodical Safety Audit of different divisions by inter-disciplinary teams from Zonal Headquarters is being conducted.

(xxi) Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernized including use of Simulators for training of drivers.

(xxii) Performance of the staff connected with train operation is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are set for crash training courses.

(xxiii) Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff and road users.

(xxiv) Stringent penalty to the extent of dismissal/removal from service is being imposed on officials causing serious accidents.

(xxv) Majority of four wheeler wagons (CRT wagons) with vacuum brake system have been phased out.

(xxvi) All new coaches are being fitted with Bogie Mounted Brake System. In addition, some of the existing coaches having adequate residual life are also being retrofitted with this system.

(xxvii) To improve crash worthiness of coaches, as an immediate measure, coach interiors are being re-designed with improved fittings and features, which would not cause injury. Simultaneously, the coach body will be re-designed to absorb more impact so as to keep passenger carrying areas intact.

(xxviii) New wagons being inducted into the system are equipped with more reliable casnub Bogies. Bogie Mounted Brake System has also been developed and is under trail. The use of Composition Brake Blocks on wagons is being progressively increased.

(xxix) All the Production Units, majority of repair workshops and large number of Sheds/Depots have achieved ISO 9002 certification for their Quality Maintenance System.

Trade in endangered bird species

*92. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that despite the laws and rules the bird catchers in India are still trading in many endangered birds and poaching the endangered animals;

(b) if so, the details of such activities detected during the last three years; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government, so far, to stop such illegal practices?